

Healthy Measures: Keeping Your Cholesterol in Check

Cholesterol is an essential substance, found in the blood and in every cell of the body. It plays several important roles in the body and one of its functions is to help the body make vitamin D and hormones. The liver makes 80 per cent of the cholesterol in your body and the other 20 per cent comes from the foods you eat.

There are different types of cholesterol in your blood. **HDL** (high density lipoprotein) cholesterol is known as “good” cholesterol and helps to remove excess cholesterol from the body. **LDL** (low density lipoprotein) cholesterol is considered “bad” cholesterol because it contributes to the build-up of plaque on artery walls which increases your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Tips to reduce your blood cholesterol levels:

- Use [Canada's Food Guide](#) to help plan your meals
- Reduce the amount of saturated and trans fat from your diet by choosing lean meats, low fat milk products and less processed foods made with butter, hard margarine, lard or shortening
- Aim for at least 7 servings of vegetables and fruit a day
- Eat more foods that are high in fibre — women should aim for 25 grams of fibre per day and men should aim for 38 gram per day (read food labels)
- Foods such as oatbran, barley, chick peas, beans, lentils, and psyllium are high in soluble fibre which can lower LDL cholesterol
- Instead of meat, eat at least 2 servings of fish each week (e.g., salmon, herring, sardines, trout)
- Be active for at least 30 minutes a day - regular physical activity is linked to higher HDL cholesterol levels
- Use low fat cooking methods, such as broiling, baking, grilling instead frying
- Limit added oils and fats to no more than 2 to 3 tbsp per day - this includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, margarine and mayonnaise

For more information:

[Heart and Stroke Foundation: Cholesterol](#)

[Nutrition Matters: Incredible Edible Fibre](#)

[Nutrition Matters: Dietary Fat – Where are we now?](#)

If you have questions on nutrition and healthy eating, contact *EatRight Ontario* at 1-877-510-5102 to speak to a Registered Dietitian.

Healthy Measures: Eat Well, Be Active and Be Yourself!